

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 are all the claims pending in the application, claims 3, 8, 10 and 13 are withdrawn from consideration and claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9, 11, 12 and 14-17 stand rejected.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 101

Claim 9 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as allegedly being directed to non-statutory subject matter.

In response, Applicants have amended claim 9 in accord with the Examiner's suggestion. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw this rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-2, 5-7, 9, 11, 12 and 14 and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mitsui (US 7,222,235), Barr et al. (US 2004/0039914) and Rhoads (US 6,411,725).

Claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, detection means for detecting said information from said photographed-image data for each of said plurality of facial regions contained in said information-attached image,

wherein the information attached relates to a person corresponding to the one of the facial regions to which the information is attached.

As set forth above, the claimed invention attaches information related to persons to facial regions of the persons within an image, including a plurality of facial regions, and detects the information from the information-attached photographed image data. Applicants respectfully submit that even if combined as suggested, the suggested combination fails to disclose "detecting said information from said photographed-image data for each of said plurality of facial regions,"

and “attaching means for attaching different information to each of the facial regions,” as recited in claim 1.

In the rejection, the Examiner contends that Mitsui discloses most of the features recited in claim 1, but concedes that Mitsui fails to disclose “that regions are facial regions.” *See* Office Action, p. 7.

In this respect, the Examiner asserts that the Barr reference discloses a method for generating ID documents having images of living organisms, and in that this method, characteristic positions within the images of living organisms are confirmed, and that electronic watermark signals are embedded within the images of living organisms such that they differ according to the characteristic positions.

However, the Barr reference does not disclose detecting facial regions as required in claim 1. Further, the Barr reference is silent regarding the technical concept of extracting a plurality of facial regions, and attaching different information to each extracted facial region.

That is, the Barr reference discloses only that data related to a single person is embedded in an image of the person as an electronic watermark, and is silent regarding the technical concept of attaching different pieces of information related to a plurality of people respectively to the facial regions of the people which are included in a single image.

Additionally, Mitsui is silent regarding the technical concept of attaching different pieces of information related to a plurality of people respectively to the facial regions of the people which are included in a single image.

Further, the Barr reference is related to a method for producing ID documents and does not contemplate images containing a plurality of people. From the nature of ID documents, it is inconceivable for a plurality of people to be included within a single image. Accordingly, Barr’s

disclosure does not disclose or even fairly suggest the technical concept of attaching different pieces of information related to a plurality of people respectively to the facial regions of the people which are included in a single image. In fact, the inclusion of multiple facial regions in the identification image of Barr would undermine the principle of operation of the reference. In effect, Barr teaches away from the features of claim 1. Rather, Barr merely disclose that information related to a single person is embedded as an electronic watermark within an image of the person.

Accordingly, neither Barr nor Mitsui discloses “attaching different information to each of a plurality of facial regions” and “detecting said information from said photographed-image data for each of said plurality of facial regions,” as recited in claim 1. Further, the Examiner does not contend and Applicants submit that Rhoads discloses or suggests any such feature.

Thus, Applicants submit that even if Barr, Mitsui and Rhoads are combined as suggested, the combination fails to disclose all the features recited in claim 1.

Thus, Applicants submit claim 1 is allowable for at least this reason. Additionally, because claims 7 and 9 recite similar features, Applicants submit these claims are allowable for the same reasons set forth above. Further, claims 2, 5-6, 11, 12 and 14-17 are allowable, at least by virtue of their dependency.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claim 4 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mitsui, Barr and Rhoads as applied to claim 1, in further view of Motta et al. (US 6,726,103).

In response, Applicants submit that because Motta, either taken alone or in combination with Mitsui, Barr and Rhoads, fails to compensate for the deficiencies of those references as applied to claim 1 above, claim 4 is allowable, at least by virtue of its dependency.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 15 and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mitsui, Barr and Rhoads as applied to claim 1, in further view of Hsieh et al. (US 7,003,135).

In response, Applicants submit that because Hsieh, either taken alone or in combination with Mitsui, Barr and Rhoads, fails to compensate for the deficiencies of those references as applied to claim 1 above, claims 15 and 16 are allowable, at least by virtue of their dependency.

New Claim

New claim 18 is added by this Amendment and submitted to be allowable by virtue of its dependency and by virtue of the features recited therein.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

/David P. Emery/

David P. Emery
Registration No. 55,154

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

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